

ages to become a support system for one another. This often leads to veterans becoming informal counselors to each other and making sure that one another stay on track. Many graduates of the program find the bond of friendship and support so beneficial that they return as volunteers to give back to others in need, especially with many veterans now returning home from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Madam Speaker, I truly admire the work that Mr. Roy Foster has done, and continues to do, for our nation's veterans each and every single day. After serving our country so valiantly, no veteran should ever have to face the future alone.

TRIBUTE TO DR. JAMES JOHNSON

HON. MARY FALLIN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Ms. FALLIN. Madam Speaker, I am saddened to rise today to note the passing of Dr. James Johnson, an adoring husband, cherished father, and respected physician in my home state of Oklahoma.

A lifelong hemophiliac, Dr. J, as he was known to so many of his patients, dedicated his life to healing others. During his more than 25 years practicing medicine, Dr. J treated thousands of patients, and worked with researchers and insurance companies on finding new ways to treat and hopefully one day cure hemophilia.

Dr. J was particularly fond of reminding students to continually challenge their minds—because while their bodies may someday fail them, they could always count on their knowledge. No one lived this out better than he did. During his months in the hospital, I am told, he would consult on his own case and instruct med students performing basic procedures on him. Always gracious and ever the educator, Dr. J would kindly suggest, “You know, son, if you do it this way, you won’t hurt your patient so much.”

Dr. J owned his own practice for many years, and was most recently medical director for a company that performs house calls for the elderly and homebound. Over the years, he worked as an ER doctor, a prison doctor, and a primary care doctor. When off the job, Dr. J was also a die-hard Sooners fan, a Thunder season-ticket holder, an amateur pilot, and an active member of his local church. But the roles he cherished most were those of husband and father.

Dr. J was laid to rest Monday in Edmond. While we take comfort in knowing that he is at peace, the State of Oklahoma and particularly who know Dr. J grieve this loss. I believe I speak for the whole House when I say our thoughts and prayers go out to Dr. J’s wife of 26 years, Becky, their daughter, Ashley, and the hundreds of family, friends, colleagues, and patients who knew and love him so dearly.

HONORING CORPORAL SYLVESTER WATTS (RETIRED)

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, this communication is forwarded on behalf of the constituents of Congressional District Three and myself as we pay tribute to the life of Corporal Sylvester Watts (Retired). We are all saddened that Sylvester is gone, but joyful that he has gone to be with his Heavenly Father.

Sylvester Watts was born October 8, 1947 in Chicago, Illinois to the late Pastor Van B. and Missionary Ruby Watts. He was the youngest of 11 children; his parents, three brothers and one sister, Rufus, Reverend Roosevelt, John and Otha, made their transition from life-mortal ahead of him. He transitioned to await the resurrection on November 29, 2009 at his home in Chicago, Illinois.

Sylvester accepted Christ as his personal Savior at an early age under the pastorate of his father at Greater Progressive Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois where he served as an usher and a member of the Youth Choir.

Sylvester joined the United States Marine Corps May 1, 1967, was temporarily retired April 16, 1969 and honorably discharged on September 30, 1974. He served his country with dignity and honor and attained the rank of Corporal. During his Military Service, he earned the National Defense Service Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Viet Nam Campaign Medal with device and Marksman Rifle Badge.

Having been reared in a Christian home where the Word of God, the love and support of family were the guiding principles, Sylvester learned early in life that “if a man doesn’t work, he doesn’t eat”, so in spite of the emotional and psychological issues he faced as a result of his tenure in Viet Nam, he was determined to survive.

Sylvester attended Elmhurst College where he majored in Business Administration. He was gainfully employed with Gerber Products Company, Watts Side Grocery (family owned) the Deputy Sheriffs Office, Strategic Services Unit, Daley Center, Chicago, Illinois, Sodexo Marriott, Trajo Enterprises and Rich Cake Enterprises.

Sylvester leaves to cherish precious memories: Missionary Janet Watts-DuPart, Reverend Lucille Watts-Watson, Reverend Van Watts, Jr. (Ruth), Benny Watts, Reverend Frank Watts, Evangelist Shirley Watts Kyles Green; Nephews: Calvin Andre, Van Blair, Vincent, Victor, Vaughn, Joseph Preston, Joseph B., Anthony, Troy, Torrence, Ivyl, Michael, Steven, Anthony; Nieces: Barbette, Janet, Loretta, Christiana, Angie, Janet, Jacqueline, Tina L., Cheryl Lynn, Donna Michelle, Lori Alva, Rubi and Kora; a special nephew, Pastor Alfonso Cleveland and a special friend, Reverend Jeanne L. Edwards, who engaged him in intellectual spiritual conversations at the dinner table whenever family gathered.

We, the Watts family, continue to strive to keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. He alone is able to keep us from fall-

ing and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Jude v 21&24.

HONORING BEVERLY SCOTT

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Beverly Scott as the outgoing President of the Yosemite Gateway Association of Realtors. Ms. Scott will be recognized at the annual installation luncheon for the Yosemite Gateway Association of Realtors on November 20, 2009 in Oakhurst, California.

The Yosemite Gateway Association of Realtors (YGAOR) first began as the Mountain Co-Op in 1998 with a group of eight volunteers. Today, the group has a paid professional staff and ownership of the Association’s building. YGAOR was responsible for developing one of the first computerized Multiple Listing Systems, which continues to operate today with the latest technology. They work very closely with the California Association of Realtors by providing leadership at both the statewide and regional levels. YGAOR provides educational opportunities for its members, as well as fundraising activities that benefit local non-profit organizations and scholarship programs.

Ms. Beverly Scott is a fifth-generation native of Eastern Madera County. After graduating from Yosemite High School, she attended Bakersfield City College and earned her Bachelor’s degree from California State University, Bakersfield. Ms. Scott has a very diverse history, including service in the United States Army, working as an editor, a photojournalist, a medical instructor, a realtor, a volunteer and a mother to four children: Skyler, Heavenly, Sierra and Raylynn. She is a true entrepreneur; the manager of Oakhurst Real Estate, and the general manager of National Computer Software, Inc.

With Ms. Scott’s role at YGAOR, she has been a strong leader and provided a voice of optimism for local real estate. The 2009 Board Members worked closely with past Board Members to create a new strategic plan and to provide guidelines for defining a strategy, making decisions and allocating YGAOR resources. The new strategic plan brought an updated mission statement: “The Yosemite Gateway Association of Realtors is committed to professional excellence for the success of its members in all aspects of the real estate industry.” With this mission statement in mind, the 2009 Board, with the leadership of Ms. Scott, established four goals: Advocacy, Communication, Education and Organizational Excellence.

Ms. Scott is a leader in the real estate industry, as well as in the Oakhurst community. She has been a member of YGAOR since 2004, and has served on various committees over the past five years. Ms. Scott has been a member of the Board of Trustees for the Bass Lake Joint Union Elementary School District since 2006, serving as Vice President in 2009; the Eastern Madera County/Oakhurst Area Chamber of Commerce since 2001, serving as President in 2004, the Wild Wonderful King Vintage Museum since 2004, serving as an Officer and a Board Member, Local Water and Sewer Committees since 2002 and is a

Charter Member of the New Community United Methodist Church. She is a past-president of the Oakhurst Sierra Sunrise Rotary, past-president of the California State Society of American Medical Technologists, past-board member of the Madera County Workforce Investment Board, past-member of the Boys and Girls Club, and past-Chaplain for the Oakhurst Elks Lodge. For her service to the community, Ms. Scott was the Golden Apple Award Recipient for 2005/2006 and was named "Oakhurst Town Mother" in 2004 by Angels Among Us, Woman of the Year.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Beverly Scott on her achievements. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Ms. Scott and the Yosemite Gateway Association of Realtors many years of continued success.

RECOGNIZING THE HARRISON VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR RECEIVING THE BLUE RIBBON AWARD

HON. HARRY TEAGUE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mr. TEAGUE. Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate Valley View Elementary School in Las Cruces, New Mexico, for receiving the Blue Ribbon School Award awarded by the U.S. Department of Education for demonstrating academic excellence and dramatic gains in student achievement levels.

The Blue Ribbon Schools award was created in 1982 to recognize schools where students attain and maintain high academic standards and are pushed to improve themselves and further their dedication to scholastic achievement. This award shows that Valley View Elementary School is working with its students to improving its academic standing and educational excellence.

Schools like Valley View Elementary earn the Blue Ribbon Schools Award because of the hard work and the tireless work of its educators and families. The students also worked hard to improve themselves and make sure that their hard work paid off. Valley View Elementary School exemplifies what it means for a school to help its students strive towards academic excellence.

I am honored to have Blue Ribbon Schools like Valley View Elementary School in my district. I commend their achievement and wish them luck in continuing their academic achievement.

MARIE HARRIS

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay respects to the passing of my friend Marie Harris. Let this congressional insert serve as a tribute to her memory and celebration of her meaningful life.

Marie Harris came to Pacoima in 1960 from Detroit where she successfully co-owned the Elite Boulevard House of Fashions and cap-

tured the "Formal Award" in a nationwide competition from the National Association of Fashion and Accessory Designers, Inc. Her professional success continued as she transferred her membership with this organization to the Los Angeles Chapter and served as Fashion Coordinator, spearheading the unforgettable Designers Showcase at the Beverly Hilton in 1963 and 1964. She began tireless efforts producing a series of Designers Showcase Fashion Shows to help raise funds to build a new edifice and educational unit of the Parks Chapel AME Church in Pacoima, and continued her work in the fashion world by becoming a columnist for the North East Valley Post writing two columns weekly, "Fashions LTD" and "Kaleidoscope" society scoop.

Marie was known for her spirit of volunteerism and unwavering dedication to public service. In 1980, Marie was appointed to the Mayor's Committee on the city's Bicentennial Celebration in the Sepulveda Basin, which motivated her to produce the Back to Pacoima Expo at the Hansen Dam Amphitheater to honor Pacoima's trailblazers. One of the many results of Marie's work in Pacoima was the naming of "Plaza of the Stars," a major shopping center located at Glenoaks and Van Nuys Boulevards.

Marie has a history of community involvement and her invaluable service has made an indelible mark on the San Fernando Valley. She was on the Board of Directors for the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley Vision 2020 and the Commissioner for the Children's Museum and Commission for the San Fernando Valley Fair. She was aptly recognized as Woman of the Year by Assemblyman Richard Katz, and later appointed as an Honorary Mayor of Pacoima by former City of Los Angeles Councilman Ernani Bernardi.

Marie was a devoted mother, and wife for the past fifty years to Alvin Harris, deceased in January 2001. She is survived by her three children Sidney Alvin, Rolene Marie, Alton Keith and five grandchildren.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Marie Harris.

HONORING DOUG CARROLL

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Doug Carroll of San Luis Obispo, CA. He is a valued member of the Central Coast Community and a valiant champion for all those living with Multiple Sclerosis. Since being diagnosed, "Pastor Doug" has maintained an active schedule, traveling to Sacramento and Washington, DC to lobby on behalf of all those affected by this horrible disease.

Back on the Central Coast, Pastor Doug managed to fit in MS fundraising and awareness events between a busy social calendar, multiple doctor and physical therapy appointments and his famous cooking classes at Spencer Market. He is a friend and inspiration to all who know him.

Though his health has deteriorated, his desire to educate others about MS has not. Countless people in my community have learned of the horrible effects this degenera-

tive disease can have on an individual. Pastor Doug has handled these challenges with grace, good humor and humility. He is an example to us all and I am proud to represent him in Congress.

RECOGNIZING MELVIN FRIERSON ON HIS RETIREMENT AS A STAFF MEMBER OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Melvin Frierson as he retires after 23 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Mel began his federal career as a staff member for Congressman Mel Price, in 1986. When Congressman Price passed away in 1988 and I was elected to fill the vacant seat, Mel remained as one of my senior staff members and he has served loyally and with distinction ever since.

In addition to his work as a member of my Congressional staff, Mel has long been involved in local politics and was a precinct committeeman in East St. Louis for over 30 years. Mel is a 33d degree Mason and has been involved in Freemasonry for 40 years. He was the Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Illinois for 2 terms, from 1985 to 1986 and is currently Deputy of the Orient for the Scottish Rite, Masonry, Prince Hall Affiliation in the State of Illinois.

Mel's community and charitable involvement has been extensive. For years, he has delivered food to needy families during the holidays, often covering the cost himself. He has also participated in the Toys for Tots campaign as well as the Relay for Life which supports the American Cancer Society.

Mel's faith and his family have always been his cornerstones. He is a long-time member of the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, in East St. Louis. Mel's family, including daughters, Ingrid and Kimberly, son Brett and grandchildren have been a source of great pride and will no doubt see a good deal more of their father and grandfather now that he is retiring.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of recognition and appreciation for a loyal staff member and good friend.

HONORING MR. TIMOTHY WILL FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Timothy Will of Rutherfordton, North Carolina, for his exemplary service to the people of Western North Carolina. Mr. Will